



## The Christmas Ball

*Sherrill Bodine*

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## **The Christmas Ball** Sherrill Bodine

Outshone by a gregarious stepsister and overbearing stepmother, Lady Athena Cummins is used to fading into the shadows. Beloved only by her youngest sister Persephone, Athena has accepted her destiny as a spinster. But Persephone has a different scheme in mind, and conspires to send Athena out for one night of fun at Lord Finchley's masquerade Christmas Ball. The masked beauty catches the Lord's eye but, determined to avoid the wrath of her stepsister, Athena leads Lord Finchley on a wild chase to discover her true identity.

\*\*originally published as part of the anthology A Regency Christmas in 1994 under the pseud Leslie Lynn

## **The Christmas Ball Details**

Date : Published December 3rd 2013 by Diversion Books (first published October 1st 1994)

ISBN : 9781626812055

Author : Sherrill Bodine

Format : ebook 62 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical Romance, Holiday, Christmas, Historical, Regency, Novella

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## From Reader Review The Christmas Ball for online ebook

### Arlena says

Title: The Christmas Ball

Author: Sherrill Bodine

Published: Diversion Book

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Rating: 5

Review:

"The Christmas Ball" by Sherrill Bodine was a wonderful written Christmas novella. This one was definitely a 'twist on Cinderella.' We find that with the help of her half sister Persephone(playing the 'fairy godmother,' Athena is going to attend a masked ball where she will really fall in love. The story had a wicked step mother and sister that was very similar to the story of 'Cinderella.' You will find read somewhat predictable but still a wonderfully told story. The sister Persephone will help Athena into attending the ball but all the rest will have to be to for love. Will Athena be able to find 'happiness and love?' The characters were all very well developed and with this story being so well intriguing you will only to given a beautiful told story. This novel will warn your heart as you are read through "The Christmas Ball." So, if you are into reading a sweet romantic read for the Christmas holiday I would definitely recommend this one to you.

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### Melanie says

Here's another 'new to me author' that's worth checking out, and you have that ability too now because it's FREE!

Okay, who doesn't love Cinderella's story? Anyone?! Didn't think so.

In this story, Cinderella is actually Athena who is helped by her half-sister Persephone by arranging for her to attend a masked ball where she falls in love.

Yes it's predictable, yes we have the wicked step-mother and sister, but in all honesty, I kind of enjoyed this story despite of it.

If you'd like to find out how this tale develops and who helps our couple, you should read it. It's FREE!

\*Melanie for b2b

\*Books provided by the publisher through NetGalley & purchased by me.

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### Jacque says

This was a love story between sisters, plus how one of those sisters helped the other get off the self and find true love. It was similar to a short Cinderella story. There are similarities and differences. I enjoyed the youngest sisters plotting and scheming all in the name of finding her sisters happiness and love. This story will warm your heart if you have siblings or if you have someone in your life that suffers from illness or difficulties.

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### **Ilze says**

Sherrill Bodine's novella "The Christmas Ball"

Actually mostly a Cinderella story set in Regency-land, not much to do with Christmas per se. Athena, the Cinderella character, has a nasty stepmother and 2 stepsisters, of whom one is nasty, while the other one is a sweetheart and stands in for the fairy godmother of the old tale. Cute story, nice way to while away an hour or so.

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### **Becky says**

This was a fairly straight-forward Cinderella tale. This time around the fairy godmother role goes to the crippled stepsister and the evil stepsister and stepmother are selfish and cruel, but not truly evil. It's a mild story which never develops beyond the basic plot and the "prince" is not very likeable.

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### **Sarah says**

A nice easy read. Athena is the oldest of three sisters, the younger two being her half sisters by her step mother. Throughout this book you get a sense of not only Cinderella but also Pride and Prejudice in a way. While Minerva, Athena's middle sister, takes after her mother in being rather mean spirited. Persephone, while being the youngest and facing her own hardships, is kind heart-ed if not a bit of plotter as well. And the father, rather like Mr. Bennett, remains oblivious of it all until the end.

I wont say any more least I give away the entire plot. While this could have been developed more and into a longer story in the end it was done well enough that you are not left with wanting more at the end.

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### **Kerr says**

Full review can also be found on: Paein and Ms4Tune's Book Blog

This was a regency Cinderella story and it was brilliant. However - you know what I'm going to say next I'm sure - it needed more detail! Too much longer though and I don't think it would have been as enjoyable, but just a little bit more at the end there.

Instead of step-sisters, Athena has 2 half sisters and only one of them is an ugly soul, the other is a dear. Her

father is also still alive. He's so deep in his research however that he has little to no idea what is going on in his own home. Things are brought to his attention towards the end of the book however and he takes control.

I think it was her mystery that caused Finchley to keep hunting for her and I think that was well done. He liked her for her mind as well as her body before he saw her face and he was also smart enough to know the woman he met and the woman she was were both her and at the same time her true self would be somewhere in between.

I do wish that the epilogue had shown some married life with them though. They had such good chemistry I wanted to see them interact, just the two of them, being married the only official time they'd be allowed to be alone together of course.

I'd also like to see Persephone's story too! I wonder if it's available?

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### **Dee says**

The Christmas Masked ball is what she had been waiting for.... her beautiful sister would do nothing for herself. She decided that if her sister was to have the beautiful dream she always dreamed about she would have to help out.... Tricking her sister into attending the ball was the first step. Now the rest was up to love. Will it or not? Good story line and great cast of characters. Really good read. Find out for yourself if love will win again??

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### **Cindy Sickenger says**

#### **Great!**

Wonderful little short story. Reminiscent of Cinderella but much more compelling and interesting. I enjoyed it very much. Thank you.

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### **Nancy Steinle gummel says**

The Christmas Ball by Sherrill Bodine is a Christmas novella. It's a period piece around 3 sisters, Althea who is 21, Minerva who is 16 and Persephone who is 13. Althea is the step sister and her step mother Charity Cummings treats her badly. Persephone has a plan to have Althea attend the Christmas ball and meet Lord Andrew Finchley since it is a costumes ball with the unmasking at midnight. Althea is the hit of the ball. Andrew can't take his eyes off her and demands every dance. She outwits Andrew to flee just before midnight. Andrew is beside himself searching for her. Will Persephone intervene again or will love go unrequited?

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### **\*?✿✿ Maki ✿✿?\* says**

It's a Regency Cinderella. There isn't really much more to say.

The synopsis makes the heroine sound much more involved in the story than she actually was.

*The masked beauty catches the Lord's eye but, determined to avoid the wrath of her stepsister, Athena leads Lord Finchley on a wild chase to discover her true identity.*

Athena doesn't lead Finchley on any sort of chase. She hopes that he *won't* recognize her, and does her best to make him leave her alone. She also doesn't avoid Finchley because of her stepsister, but because she's sure that if Finchley knew who his goddess really was, he'd be disappointed.

Lies! Lies everywhere!

Of course, it takes Finchley forever to recognize Athena (or there wouldn't be much of a plot). But aside from him eventually figuring things out, most of the story wouldn't have happened if it weren't for Persephone, Athena's younger sister, and the fairy god mother character. Athena was just kind of a passive character.

Persephone was by far the most interesting character of the story. I'd totally read *her* story.

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### **Carrie Felton says**

This was a very fun cute Cinderella-type story. I thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to exploring more by this author.

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### **Anna Marie says**

An e-book that was rather short, it cannot be said that this one isn't sweet. A Regency re-telling of Cinderella, this was an enchanting story for the holidays. And did I mention FREE on Amazon?

In 'The Christmas Ball', Athena lives with her distracted historian father, her two stepsisters (Minerva and Persephone) and a wicked stepmother. When a Duke comes to the small country village they reside in, all the local girls are a'twitter... but not Athena. She's been well trained to fade into the background and take care of her family (particularly Persephone, who is lame). It's Minerva's job to shine. So when it's time for the Christmas masked ball and all the ladies are putting together feather costumes, Athena - as always - assures her family that she will stay home and look after Persephone.

But Persephone has worked all year on a dress for Athena - a flawless disguise so that no one will know that it's her. So that Athena can go to the ball and pretend to be someone else, just for one night. And of course she falls for the Duke, and as she's leaving, a rosette falls off her dress... and the Duke is determined to find his mysterious beauty...

It was definitely a close re-telling. But I still LIKED it. It was well-written, descriptive, and beautifully done as a holiday tale - complete with snow fort building and snowball fights. Although honestly? I don't know HOW he didn't know who she was. She was unusual in her coloring, so it's not as though she blended with

the other girls. Still, I LIKED it!

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### **Rebecca (everyday reader) says**

A Cinderella type story complete with a wicked step-sister and mother. The oldest goes to the masked Christmas ball with the help of her youngest sister and earns the notice of a very handsome earl. He doesn't know who she is so while looking for her he gets to know the family and finds the immaturity of the women. Love blooms even more when he discovers the mystery girl, an engagement occurs immediately, and the mean women are punished and are watched more closely by the dad of the family. Great read!!

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### **Kathy \* Bookworm Nation says**

This was a cute regency retelling of Cinderella. Athena is the beautiful older sister who loses her mother at a young age and her father remarries. His new wife has two daughters and of course doesn't want Athena competing with them and keeps her secluded. The youngest sister, Persephone, has a kind spirit and plays Fairy Godmother by arranging for Athena to attend the Christmas Ball. Of course, while there she meets a handsome stranger and falls in love.

Cinderella is probably my favorite fairytale and I love when it's retold in a regency setting. I thought it was sweet to have the youngest sister trying to help Athena find love. The book was pretty short (around 60 pages) and so there wasn't a whole lot of character or story development, it felt a little rushed to me and some things didn't make sense (view spoiler) I also didn't really care for Lord Finchley, since the story is so short there is not a lot of time to build up his character and I thought it was counterproductive to start out by making him such a "rake" and then in one night he falls for the mysterious Athena and wants only her. I have hard time believing he would ever stay faithful, especially after only knowing her such a short time They were engaged w/n a couple days...really, I'm supposed to buy that?. His character wasn't portrayed as one with values, so I can't help but question his sincerity, which lessened my enjoyment of the story. I also thought the POV transitions were to abrupt and I sometimes lost whose head I was supposed to be in.

Overall, a light read and a pleasant way to pass an hour.

#### Content

Romance: Clean

Source: Amazon Kindle Freebie (12/2013)

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